



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/612,055	07/07/2000	Joseph H. Sklar	SKLAR-21	6809

7590 11/09/2005  
ST.ONGE STEWARD JOHNSTON & REENS LLC  
986 Bedford Street  
Stamford, CT 06905-5619

EXAMINER

BUMGARNER, MELBA N

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3732

DATE MAILED: 11/09/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

09/612,055

Applicant(s)

SKLAR, JOSEPH H.

Examiner

Melba Bumgarner

Art Unit

3732

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 October 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 14-18 and 20-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 14-18 and 20-23 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### DETAILED ACTION

1. In view of applicant's communication of October 14, 2005 and upon further consideration, the final rejection of July 12, 2005 is withdrawn. The indicated objection to claims in the last office action is also withdrawn. The amendment filed on October 14, 2005 has been entered and the following is the action on the merits.

#### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103*

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 14-18 and 20-23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sklar et al. (WO 98/23229) in view of Luscombe et al. (5,683,418). Sklar et al. disclose a ligament shim comprising a body 48 having a first end and a second end, and an axis extended from the first end to the second end, the first and second ends being substantially planar, the first and second ends having a length and a central width, the length being longer than the central width, at least a first surface and a second surface extending from the first end to the second end and substantially parallel to the axis, at least the first surface being arc-shaped, and two outwardly rounded surfaces extending from the first end to the second end (figures 8 and 9); however, Sklar et al. does not show a shim hole. Luscombe et al. teach a shim comprising a hole 5 extending from the first surface to second surface, the body being devoid of further opening. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the shim of Sklar et al. with the hole as in Luscombe et al. in order to be able to

Art Unit: 3732

guide a suture through the opening to aid in securing the shim in position in view of Luscombe et al. Sklar et al. show an embodiment wherein the first arc-shaped surface extends outwardly from the axis, the second surface is a flat surface (figure 7). It would have been an obvious matter of choice to one of ordinary skill in the art as to the shape of the first surface and second surface being arc-shaped and opposed to each other with the first surface extending outwardly from the axis and the second surface extending inwardly toward the axis, in that the disclosure does not show an embodiment of such first and second surface with two outwardly rounded surfaces extending from the first end to the second end. Neither is an embodiment with two substantially flat parallel surfaces, first surface being arc-shaped, second surface, and two outwardly rounded surfaces all extending from the first end to the second end disclosed.

#### *Response to Arguments*

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to the rejected claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

#### *Conclusion*

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Melba Bumgarner whose telephone number is 571-272-4709.

The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kevin Shaver can be reached at 571-272-4720. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Art Unit: 3732

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Melba Bumgarner". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Melba Bumgarner  
Primary Examiner